

Subject: FW: Killer Dust

Date: Sun, 10 Jul 2005 10:53:04 -0700

From: "Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>

To: "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>

CC: <fonvca@fonvca.org>

From: Ernie Crist
Sent: Sunday, July 10, 2005 10:51 AM
To: 'Gary Johnson'
Subject: RE: Killer Dust

DEAR MR. JOHNSON:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR THOUGHTFUL RESPONSE- YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT, THE KILLER DUST STORY IS INCIDENTAL AT BEST. STILL IT REMINDS US OF THE PRECARIOUSNESS OF THE PLANET'S ENVIRONMENT WHICH WE AS A SPECIES HAVE BEEN TAKING FOR GRANTED FAR TOO LONG.

Thank you again.

Ernie Crist

From: Gary Johnson _____]
Sent: Sunday, July 10, 2005 10:17 AM
To: Ernie Crist
Subject: RE: Killer Dust

Generally I agree with you on this issue, however I think your message linking "killer dust" to ensuring adequate "forestation" is a bit of a stretch. It is okay, but I don't think vegetation does anything to address particulates. As I understand the benefits of vegetation they are primarily twofold, absorption of carbon dioxide and climate stabilization (moderation). The benefit of carbon dioxide absorption is obvious and as I mentioned to you in the email regarding the pesticide bylaw, a "green" environment helps ensure that we in the District of North Vancouver stay away from the conditions (i.e. concrete jungle of NV city) that would lead to an increase in electric or hydrocarbon fuel usage for cooling our buildings. Being surrounded by trees, green grass and other foliage simply makes the ambient conditions more comfortable.

With regard to the "forestation" of the District, I have a few comments.

* As evidenced by the original clear cutting of Lynn Valley and Capilano Highlands, these unsightly practices can be corrected. Except for the trees in our steep creek gulleys, the residents planted most of the vegetation that is now taller than the houses in these areas. So optimistically conditions can be improved.

* We need to ensure diversification of tree and vegetation species so that diseases or pests (bugs) do not wipe out a significant portion in one period of infestation. Some guidance could be provided to homeowners in order to achieve this diversity (maybe there should be a "tree of the year" as a bit of a novelty - the nurseries can help out on this). This also means that it may make sense to remove some cedar or hemlock trees to get a better balance in a particular area.

* This may be incorrect, but I understand that younger vegetation is more of an environmental benefit than old growth. I believe it has to do with the amount of green surface compared to the size of the plant. So this implies that possibly it would be beneficial to remove a very tall old growth tree in favour of a few young trees, in some locations.

Particulates, I believe, are only removed from the air by falling out or being washed out. We have a lot of rain so our particulate pollution is probably washed out, but it does end up on the ground. It is not likely that we will see a significant change in the practices of the developing countries in Asia. So unfortunately, regardless of what we do in North America, any cloud of dust coming from Asia will end up on top of us. This also means that whatever we do here, e.g. the Pesticide Control Bylaw, is not likely to be effective since the amount of pesticides we use in North Vancouver is likely not more than a drop in a very large bucket arriving from the Asian continent.

So back to pesticides. I still have concerns regarding a bylaw that will be impossible to enforce and have little effect on the environment. I strongly support the informed, responsible use of pesticides as part of a vegetation management plan. I think there are sufficient industry experts that can provide homeowners and commercial properties plans that minimize pesticide usage. I think promoting responsible usage (very positive) is an easier sell than a bylaw (removing residents freedoms).

PS When you retire I hope someone continues your position regarding the imbalance between the City and District. I am tired of my taxes (e.g. for fields, etc) paying for their recreation areas. When we had the referendum for expenditures many years ago we should have included the proviso that the District won't spend the funds unless the City contributes equally on a per capita basis, even if it was spent within their boundaries. It was ridiculous that we approved borrowing of substantially more than the City turned down. I don't like bureaucracy however I have often thought that the District should increase user fees (rental) in some relationship to the predominance of recreation sites (and access) in the District compared to the City. The District could allow a credit back to residents on their property taxes but what it does is shift wealth from the non-district users to the District.

Sorry for the long winded ravings. Hope you are having a nice weekend anyway.

Gary Johnson

-----Original Message-----

From: Ernie Crist [mailto:ernie_crist@dnv.org]

Sent: Saturday, July 09, 2005 2:48 PM

Subject: FW: Killer Dust

A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST - A NEW WAY OF PROTECTING THE PLANET INCLUDING USING PESTICIDES;

The latest edition of Discover (Science) Magazine deals extensively with a phenomena which is overtaking the planet with staggering consequences.

The story headed "Killer Dust" confirms that every year gigantic particle storms sweep across the oceans, dumping viruses, acids, pesticides, heavy metals, and even grasshoppers on the United States and not only on the United States.

Worldwide deforestation, mining, overgrazing, and the diversion of water have combined to create huge dust clouds that carry bacteria, viruses, soot, acids, radio active isotopes, and pesticides around the world. A massive dust cloud from the Asian continent passed over Japan in 2002, travelling a man made dust byway that runs east. Uneven heating of the ground and air generate turbulent airflows that keep sediments aloft.

A moderately wimpy, sustained wind with turbulent gusts will be enough to lift particles into the Atmosphere says meteorologist Tom Warner of

the National Center of Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado. Although Dust storms start out gritty, coarse sediments like sand soon fall out, leaving finer silts and clays to rise up to 15,000 feet and travel thousands of miles. An Asian Dust storm that swept over the West Coast of the United States in April 2001 spread to Cape Cod and eventually reached Europe. In Japan the seasonal dust cloud from China is called yellow because of its color, carrying pollutants, including heavy metals, that attach to airborne sediments. Roughly half the mercury contamination in the United States comes from this source; much of it may arrive aboard particles in atmospheric dust clouds.

Dust from the Mojave Desert contains an array of mineral grains, as well as diatom, a single-celled aquatic organisms commonly carried by dust. African dust collected in Barbados carries an unidentified fungus. More than one hundred species of bacteria, viruses, and fungi have been cultured from airborne dust. Roughly one third of the bacteria are pathogens that can cause diseases in plants, animals and people. These include pseudomonades, which give rise to ear and skin infections in humans, and the microbes responsible for sugarcane rust, potato dry rot, and banana leaf spot.

Results from studies such as the international Aerosol Characterization Experiments, which examined the trajectory and mineral content of dust clouds crossing the Pacific in 2001, reveal that dust also carries pollution. African Dust that fell on the Azores in 2000 was enriched with Mercury, probably from open pit mines in Algeria.

Scientists are concerned that the hazards are intensifying. Some 3 billion metric tons of dust are lofted into Earth's atmosphere each year and that amount has climbed steadily for a decade, possibly owing to the increase in surface area now covered by deserts and dry lake beds. Unless this trend is reversed the dust storms will only worsen. In some parts of the world dust storms have become five times more intensive than previously. Beginning in 1950, China planted 300 million trees in a belt south of the Gobi Desert to protect its provinces from the storms much as the Great Wall once stood against Mongolian Invaders. This seems to have helped lessen the siege of Beijing but has done little for Japan, Korea and the United States and the rest of the world that lies downwind.

Trees definitely lessen the impact of atmospheric pollution. Regions, such as the Lower Mainland could protect themselves by insuring that the total number of trees in the Region is maintained. This would mean implementing a Regional Air Pollution and Tree Inventory Protection Strategy. The cornerstone of such a strategy would be that, notwithstanding any other planning issue, the absolute number of trees in every municipality is not only maintained but, if possible, increased. In the District of North Vancouver it would mean no development unless it guarantees that the total number of trees is maintained.

A whole new community planning strategy is in order and it must begin at home. The District of North Vancouver was the first municipality in the Lower Mainland to pioneer community driven planning as opposed to developer driven planning. Eventually Community planning was embraced by the provincial government making Community Planning mandatory.

However community driven and sustainable planning has been constantly assailed by pro developer interests and their political representatives and Lynn Valley in the District of North Vancouver is probably the best example of this outdated and bankrupt approach to planning. In the name of creating a "Pedestrian Oriented Town Center" consisting of a 12,000 square foot cobble stone plaza the whole Lynn Valley Core was turned over to developers who came, densified, created more pollution, cut more trees, increased traffic and noise and left while the people were left with paying for the infrastructure needed for the development but nothing else.

On the other hand, in most other areas of the District it has been successful notably in Seymour and in Edgemont where the public stood up against outside driven development. However, the City of North Vancouver is hurrying along the road of creating a concrete jungle. It does so without providing additional green space. It is not the creation of a green belt that counts which is meaningless unless the actual number of trees is either maintained and/or increased.

The urgency of changing direction is considerable since large parts of the world continue to be denuded including the Amazon Basin where 50 % of the Amazon Rain Forest will be removed. Liveability of cities will have to take on a new meaning. From now on it will mean no development if it results in the loss of the municipal tree inventory.

With this in mind I will draft a resolution for Council's consideration within the next few days.

Ernie Crist

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